rate of return was made out in the final location engineering cum traffic survey for conversion of Bhatinda-Kotkapura Fazilka metre gauge line;

(b) what is the present resource cost of transport on this metre gauge railway line and what is the likey resource cost of transportation in the eventuality of its being converted to broad gauge, as made out in the said survey;

(c) what will be the resultant saving of rail-journey between Fazilka and Delhi, in Kilometres, by conversion of metre gauge line between Fazilka and Kotkapura to broad gauge; and

(d) whether it is a fact that this conversion is also likely to provide direct rail link betwen Fazilka and Delhi, besides being strategic from defence angle, in view of Fazilka being a border area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) Net annual gain expected to be realised as a result of the proposed investment in a project after meeting the working expenses and depreciation, when expressed as a percentage on the total capital cost of the project is the Rate of Return of the project. As per the Final Location Engineering-Cum-Traffic Survey for conversion of Bhatinda-Kotkapura-Fazilka MG line is concerned, the rate of return under DCF technique has been worked out as 3.46 per cent.

(b) The working cost of this MG section has not been maintained separately. However, for working out the operation profitability of the project, the cost of haulage of MG system of Northern Railway as per Unit Cost has been applied. As per 1982-83 unit cost data, the cost of haulage of goods wagon/vehicle per Km. per MG & BG are as under (In paisa) :—

	MG	BG
Goods	178.84	129.77
Passenger	201.92	217.45

(c) This route is 55 Kms less than the existing all BG route via Firozpur. Even at present, it is possible to travel via shorter route with change of trains at Kotkapura.

(d) Fazilka is, served and is connected to Delhi by BG line via Firozpur. This proposal has not been considered as a strategic line.

Operational life of Railway lines

1197. SHRI F. M. KHAN : Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the operational life of metre gauge, broad gauge and narrow gauge railway tracks;

(b) whether the railway tracks are replaced after expiry of the said period; and

(c) the year in which the Fazilka-Bhatinda railway track was laid and when it is due for replacement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) Life of railway tracks depends on track structure alignment characteristics and traffic density.

(b) Tracks are renewed as and when required on condition basis subject to availability of resources.

(c) The rails on this section vary from 50 lb to 75 lb laid from 1908 to 1969. The sleepers are wooden, steel through and cast iron, etc. and the year of laying varies from 1960 to 1976. Taking into consideration the traffic, condition of track and comparative needs of various sections, renewal of 6 kms. of track was found necessary and the same is targetted for completion in 1986-87.

Irregularities in the Inland Container in Delhi

1198. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA : Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are large scale irregularities going on